



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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RIDLEY-THOMAS, EPA ADMINISTRATOR LISA JACKSON ANNOUNCE ACQUISITION OF SOFT BOTTOM PARCEL OF COMPTON CREEK *Effort is part of collaborative commitment to revitalize Compton Creek*

LOS ANGELES – Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas joined Environmental Protection Agency Administrator (EPA) Lisa Jackson, environmentalists, and a broad coalition of public and private stakeholders to announce the strategic acquisition of a four acre “soft bottom” parcel of land in Compton as part of their commitment to revitalize Compton Creek.

Alongside Ms. Jackson, the Supervisor explained how public ownership of the key parcel of land will allow prompt restoration, improved pedestrian and bike access, and the creation of a much-needed recreational amenity within the community.

“We are here today to celebrate the renaissance and revitalization of Compton Creek and its important virtues related to the natural environment, recreational opportunities, and flood protection,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said about the creek, which many remember as the Compton Canal.

“It was a place where youth went to recreate, to explore, and even to fish,” the Supervisor said. “However, over the years, the impact of urbanization has had a profound toll on the creek, its native habitat, and its ability to promote public safety.”

To ensure the vitality and sustainability of the creek, the Supervisor pointed out that the County must revive a federal partnership and ensure the prompt study and thorough analysis of the Compton Creek levee system.

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After extensive study, the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, in coordination with FEMA, has determined that the levee system protecting the lower reaches of Compton Creek no longer has the capacity to contain a 100-year storm event.

“The Army Corps of Engineers must work with the County on an Ecosystem Restoration Study to address increasing flood protection concerns within the Compton Creek Watershed. Alternatives must be identified that address the public safety, natural habitat, recreational opportunities, and economic vitality of the creek and the overall watershed,” the Supervisor said.

He acknowledged the combined efforts of a collaboration of committed partners, which included the EPA, the County of Los Angeles, Heal the Bay, the Mountains and Rivers Conservation Authority, City of Compton, Flood Control District, and the Los Angeles and San Gabriel River Watershed Councils.

He also thanked the many stakeholder organizations which have recognized that public ownership of this key parcel will allow for prompt restoration, improved pedestrian and bike access, and the creation of a much-needed recreational amenity within the community.

“As we celebrate short time victories, we must remain focused on the long term objectives that will make this creek a true hub of environmental and community sustainability,” the Supervisor said.

“It’s a good day to be in Compton, and it is a good day to be at the Compton Creek.”

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